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Record-breaking January to June temperatures

31 July 2002

The first six months of the year have been the warmest on record in the northern hemisphere and the second warmest globally, figures from the Met Office have revealed.

The average temperature in the northern part of the globe during the first half of 2002 was the warmest in 143 years, and, globally, the January to June period was the second warmest on record. Only 1998 had a warmer first half of the year, because of the influence of El Niño.

These global statistics are compiled using data from land and sea, which have been analysed by the Met Office and the University of East Anglia.

Although temperatures in England and Wales have mostly been below average since mid-June, the year so far has been more than a degree above the 1961-90 average. Apart from February, which was a very wet month, rainfall across the British Isles so far this year has been similar to the average over 1961-90.

Briony Horton, Climate Research Scientist at the Met Office, said: "Globally 2002 is likely to be warmer than 2001, and may even break the record set in 1998. For the people of the UK it is very likely that maximum and minimum temperatures will be higher, there will be less frost and more intense rain events as the global temperature increases."

Notes:

Global average temperature anomaly: Jan-June 2002: 0.57 °C, beaten by Jan-June 1998: 0.60 °C.

Northern hemisphere average temperature anomaly: Jan-June 2002: 0.73 °C, the second warmest was 1998: 0.66 °C

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